

OCTOBER 1974

# youth

MAGAZINE

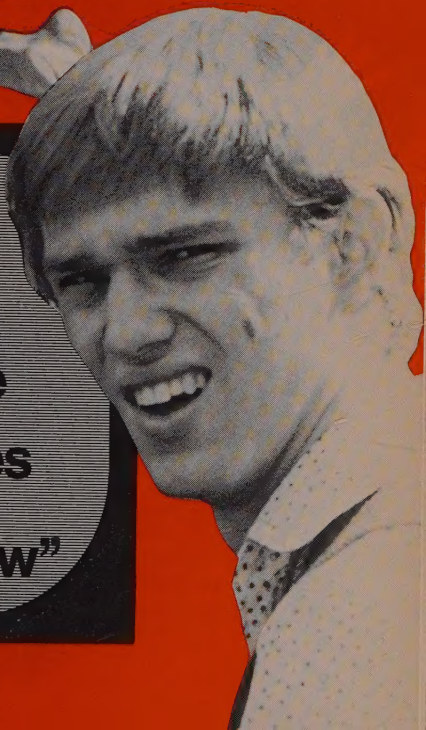


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EXHIBIT  
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**Talking back  
to the tube**

**There's a cable  
in your TV future**

**Behind the scenes  
at the  
"Carol Burnett Show"**





# TRAPPED BY THE TUBE?

By Robert Lewis Shayon

Having grown up with television, the younger generation today is often quicker to see through its glamor to reality. I've seen it among the students I work with. Because their growing life experiences are taking them outside the home and because increasing studies of television are raising their consciousness, many of them realize that television is more than simply entertainment and news. Television is probably the most important socializing force in our lives today. It is powerful politically, socially, and economically. And when people begin to realize that fact, they see through the myth of its being just a pleasure machine—a boob tube.

**WHEN YOUTH ARE CRITICAL.** There is an interesting distinction between teen-age viewers and adult viewers of television. In the early years of childhood, the viewing pattern tends to be very heavy in terms

of time, appreciation, and absorption in television. Kids like it. But when they get into the junior high age and early teens, they tend to get preoccupied with other things and television viewing drops off. When they get to college, they discover print media and also their own personal activities take them away from the set. And so youth generally tend to become critical of television.

But what happens when these young people get married, have a family, get into the job routine, and settle down into the young-adult-family pattern? They work at jobs which generally

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Dr. Shayon is Professor of Communications at The Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania. A television critic as well as a writer-producer-director, his books on broadcasting include *Television and Our Children*, *Open to Criticism*, and *The Crowd-Catchers—Introducing Television*. This article is based on his response to questions asked him by the staff of YOUTH Magazine.

# TELEVISION TENDS TO CULTIVATE CERTAIN VALUES AND STEREOTYPES, SUCH AS THE IMAGE OF THE WOMAN AS THE HOUSEKEEPER AND THE MANAGER OF CONSUMPTION

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magazine

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tend not to absorb their whole capacities, and a certain amount of what psychologists call "alienation" sets in. These workers come home at night tired and they become home-bound, generally speaking, and television is the easiest way to get a little escape and a little fun. Once they settle into this young-adult-family pattern, the criticism of television, if it doesn't fall off, tends to be resigned, and they view it because there is nothing else to watch. Television is the cheapest entertainment on the leisure market.

So when teenagers have a critical attitude toward television, I am tempted to ask them, "How long are you going to sustain it? Are you going to fall into the same family viewing trap when you get married and raise a family?"

IS TV GOOD FOR US? When you try to answer, "Is television today good for the public?", you have to back off a bit and ask, "What is the function of television in our system? The function of television, some people will maintain, is to advance consumerism in our society. We have what Galbraith has called "managed demand." In a society of scarcity the consumer is more or less sovereign for he dictates what goods are produced. But in a society of affluence where you can produce more goods



than the market demands, advertising tends to manage consumer demands and television is the chief instrument for managing those demands.

To be an effective tool of advertising, television sets out to attract as wide a circle of viewers as it possibly can and, in the process, it tends to push down the general level of programming, it tends to produce a sameness of programming, it tends to cultivate certain values in our society (such as the good consumer life, the image of the woman as the housekeeper and the manager of consumption, etc.), and it tends to convey certain stereotypes (of particular groups of people, of violence and law enforcement, etc.).

Whether these images and values are the healthiest thing to be encouraging in a democratic society is very questionable. So when people ask if the present pattern of television is good for society, I would say that it

is a limiting factor—intellectually, psychologically, and spiritually—in the growth of the people in the television audience. Now I think that is not a “good.”

**IS TV A NEW RELIGION?** With the advent of electronic communications—particularly television—the church has lost a great deal of its impact on socializing the young. Yet for generations the church has been one of the major institutions in Western society in the Judeo-Christian tradition which has spoken out for values, set standards of conduct, and generally contributed a vision of the importance and dignity of human life in the eyes of God.

But we’ve got a new secular religion in our society. In fact, some would say that television is our new religion. It has all the aspects of ritual, of sacrament, and of worship; certainly people spend more time with

# PEOPLE FEEL A SENSE OF POWERLESSNESS TODAY. GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORLD AND THEY WILL GAIN A SENSE OF SELF-IMPORTANCE

television than they spend in church. So television has become the conveyor of the ethical and religious values of our society, purely secular, unleavened by a religious conscience. In biblical terms, you could call television the new idolatry.

So should the church countenance this or should it raise its prophetic voice—which it has historically done—and speak up? That doesn't mean that television is a false idol to be destroyed but it certainly ought to be brought under those ethical, humanistic and religious considerations that are meaningful to the fullness of life the church has long espoused.

The church has been lax in the past. It has been basically interested in getting time on the air within the context of the present system, but it ought to become a critic and a guide for the media. It's about time that the church got into this business of critically evaluating the esthetic and ethical dimensions of broadcasting under the religious perspective.

**A FEELING OF POWERLESSNESS.** Anyone who is sensitive to what it means to be a human being should be aware of what is going on in our society, and especially those who are concerned about the religious dimension. After all, the religious perspective teaches us that a human

being is certainly a good deal more than a consumer, that a person should be an independent autonomous being who takes his or her cues from divine intelligence, and that every person should be able to do something about the quality and significance of his or her own life.

But most people today have a great feeling of powerlessness. You find that you're caught in a rat race where you've got no options, and there's nothing you can do about it. The whole Watergate Syndrome is persuading us that the only response a citizen has is cynicism about our public institutions. What can help shake off this feeling of the individual's powerlessness in our society? If anything can help, it is the mass media, because of their prestige, their reach into our society, and their powers of persuasion.

It is very important that the media—besides entertaining us—should be used to help us confront the great social and religious issues of society.

**REGAINING A SENSE OF SELF-IMPORTANCE.** The idea of the public's participation is tied up with what I call "media literacy." Most of us are media illiterates when it comes to electronics. What would you think of a person who could read but not write? It is reasonable to say

such a person would be half literate. Yet in our society where the electronic media have overwhelmed the print media in terms of impact, 99.9 percent of our population are electronic media illiterates. Most people can *receive* electronic messages, but how many can *send* them, or get a chance to do so?

With television being so important in our society, this factor of participation in sending electronic messages is related to our own sense of identity. Whatever or whoever gets on television has status, prestige and importance in our society, but the average person never gets on television and so he or she can't help but feel not as important sometimes. So if you put the tools of electronic communications — cameras, recorders, microphones — into the hands of people and teach them how to be electronic media literates—how to *send* messages as well as *receive* them, I think you will develop a new sense of self-identity and self-importance that can help change the feeling of powerlessness which people have in our society.

We need to emphasize that this is a way for people—young and old—to develop a new sense of participation and to get power and input in their own institutions. That is what democracy is all about—without participation, it doesn't mean anything. It is the citizenship aspect of broadcasting which I think has been hidden under a bushel and it is time to bring it out and set it on a hill, to use biblical phraseology.

## BEGIN TO ASK QUESTIONS.

While watching television, if we are to be electronic media literates, we need to improve our ability at being better receivers, as well as senders, of electronic messages. I have written a book called *Open to Criticism* in which I try to develop the critical sense in television viewers. By critical sense, I mean the ability to go beneath the superficial presentation of facts or patterns, to relate them to other facts and patterns, to get new insights, to place things in context, to ask questions of ideas that are presented to you—in other words, to engage in dialogue with what is presented.

When you watch a crime show, for example, instead of just absorbing it passively as an entertainment device, it would be interesting for you to ask, "What is this program telling me about the nature of law enforcement in our society? What is the image of the police officer it's presenting to me? What is the image of the victim? Why is it that crime dramas always involve crimes that surround rich people, never poor people?"

Did you know that, in reality, most crimes of violence are committed on poor people and within family situations? Yet we rarely see the poor victimized on television. Why is that so? Most people don't ask; they just accept it uncritically. But if you begin to ask questions, you become aware of why certain patterns are being built up and they tell us interesting things about our society. So I

# TELEVISION IS PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIALIZING FORCE IN OUR LIVES TODAY. IT IS POWERFUL POLITICALLY, SOCIALLY, AND ECONOMICALLY

encourage you to develop your own critical faculties. You can ask questions of yourself, of your friends, or of others. You can read reviews of television programs more critically.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?** More and more courses about mass media are beginning to be taught, not only at the college and university level, but even at the high school and junior high school levels. As youth becomes familiar with television equipment, the new generation becomes more sophisticated about what television is. Through reading, study, and thinking, young people see that behind that box with entertainment and news is a way of life, a way of socializing people, a way of control, a way of shaping the visions of reality.

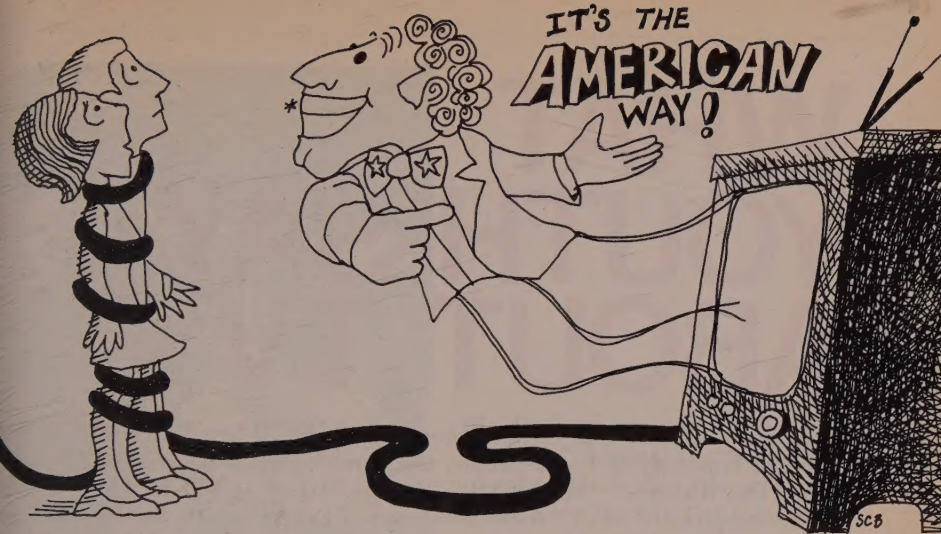
As you examine television as an institution, you will gain the knowledge and information which will then give you the leverage to change the pattern of broadcasting in our society, either through more creative and responsible use of the media as it presently exists, or through influencing or enforcing the regulatory functions now existing through the Federal Communications Commission, or through new legislation in Congress, or through the development and exploitation of new forms of broadcasting, such as cable television,

which presumably promises a greater degree of diversity and choice.

**YOU CAN ACT NOW.** During your high school and college years, if you see that courses don't exist which probe the mass media as a social institution, as an art form, as a vocational possibility, you should ask the schools to introduce them.

While in high school, you can become involved in local citizens groups which are burgeoning all over the country, such as the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting and others. Almost every city has a citizens community group which is examining the performances of local stations to make sure they're abiding by FCC license requirements, especially at license renewal time. Some groups are making the community aware of what are the responsibilities of broadcasters, what are the rights of citizens, what are legal remedies for violence and over-commercialization on television, what are political processes and other ways to help improve local programming. Many manuals and guides for citizen action are available. Check them for things you and your friends can do.

And as cable television moves into your community, you can join the citizens who are becoming involved in the planning of the system. At t



time of the granting of the franchise by the local municipality you can try to make certain that opportunities for citizen's access and public participation are built into the system in advance.

#### VOCATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

The market for employees in television has been growing as more stations are added. At present, we have about saturated the coverage of the U.S. in terms of very high frequency (VHF) and ultra high frequency (UHF) stations. There are still a lot of blank spaces in the market, of course. There are many more radio than video stations. And there is a wide variety of jobs involved—not just the highly-visible performers, but camera crew, engineers, managers, technicians, writers, artists, sales personnel, etc. And the advent of cable television promises to open up an entirely new market.

But cable is only the beginning.

In the 1980's and 1990's, we will be entering what we call the "broadband communications" era in this country and it is going to be a much bigger ball game than just radio, television, and cable TV. "Broadband communications" means that over the coaxial cable, and ultimately through optical fibers (a method of transmitting video and sound signals by light beams through glass conductors), we will be able to send many more signals over the systems than have ever before been imagined.

There will be tremendous diversity of services which will open up new fields of communications activity. Then youth will face many more opportunities—and responsibilities—beyond the conventional ones today.

While being aware of what's going on today, get ready for tomorrow. □

# WHAT YOUTH SAY ABOUT TV

What are your likes and dislikes about television? When YOUTH Magazine surveyed hundreds of young people, we learned that their favorite TV shows were "The Waltons," "M\*A\*S\*H," "Happy Days," and "Kung Fu," in that order. Samples of "why?" these shows were liked are on the following page. The young people said their favorite TV performers were Carol Burnes, Alan Alda, Richard Thomas, David Carradine, and Ron Howard, in that order. We also asked: "What is your biggest criticism of television?" The sampling of these answers follow. Do you agree?

My biggest criticism of TV is that there is too much violence, even in cartoons for children. I feel there should be more family shows and less violence. —Deborah Schneider, 17, Jefferson City, Mo.

Well, over here in Germany we get only old programs ("The Fugitive," "Burke's Law," etc.). We don't get new episodes.

—Jane Trigg, 17, Germany

In every drama show, such as "Dr. Welby," "Doc. Elliot," "Kojak," the ending is always the same.

—John Pergande, 17, Navarre, O.

*There are not enough educational shows oriented to the intelligent adult. An example is "Nova" on educational TV. PBS has a lot of good programming for diverse interests and ages.*

—Dave Ridderow, 18, Wilmington, L.

*It is not innovative or creative; there is a lack of experimentation. Also, most programs are geared to the same type of audience. I find that its objective is to entertain and/or arouse emotion, but it fails to go a step further and channel what a person has seen into useful information for the purpose of daily living.*

—Sue Echelmeier, 18, Higginsville,



## THE WALTONS

I like "The Waltons" because it strongly relates to me as an example of my home life and my family.

—Lorin Cope, 18, Beloit, O.

I like "The Waltons" because it lets me escape to a time period and a place I've always loved. In the midst of all my troubles, the family on "The Waltons" seems to make my problems seem small.

—Rochelle Stackhouse, 16, Bethlehem, Pa.

*My favorite program is "The Waltons" because it's so real and down-to-earth that it's interesting. They have the kind of family I think we'd all like to have.*

—Janet Smith, 18, Kittanning, Pa.

"The Waltons" is appealing to me because of the honesty in life it portrays and the homespun mannerisms and universality. I can feel the part of John-Boy.

—Billy Allen, 16, Charlotte, N.C.

*I enjoy "The Waltons" because the characters are warm and human. Every segment brings out a good point which is still relevant in today's world because it applies to people.*

—Mary Mihalyi, 18, Burlington, Wis.

I like "The Waltons" because it shows that money and fancy things aren't the basis for happiness. Also it shows struggles, joys, heartaches, and triumphs, all.

—Myrna Osborne, 17, Harper, Kans.



## HAPPY DAYS

"Happy Days" is my favorite because it gives me the impression that my generation is not as bad as my parents' was.

—Pat Seifrig, 17, Hammond, Ind.

"Happy Days" gives us of the 70's a more realistic idea of what our parents went through. Our problems were theirs.

—Linda Fraley, 17, Alpena, Mich.

"Happy Days" is just a funny show about teenagers when they didn't worry about anything but fun. It is merely a nice break from reality and today's problems.

—George Lester, 16, Westwood, Mass.

Commercials—everyone agrees there are too many, and that can't be changed. But they're so stupid, so idiotic, so insane. People make fools out of themselves trying to sell a product.

—Bill Darger, 13, Salt Lake City, Utah

They show too much of the same thing; one year it's westerns, the next comedies, then comes detectives. How about a little of each every year?

—Doreen Trichler, 15, Wyoming, Mich.

**Propaganda—the warping of reality. TV builds a facade, much can disrupt your imagination, and you easily escape . . .**

—Chris DeLuca, 16, Laurel, Md.

It's too easy to spend an evening glued to a TV set instead of doing something more creative. Also, it teaches American culture and ideas, and one is always confronted with commercials which are an insult to one's intelligence.

—Charla Nettleton, 18, McPherson, Kan.



## KUNG FU

I like "Kung Fu." I enjoy martial arts, and the work of Caine's masters is very vivid when actually thought about.

—Mark Bittner, 16, Southington, Conn.

I like "Kung Fu" because it contains much food for thought. Some philosophical truths are incorporated into the program and it doesn't go along with a view of violence for violence's sake.

—Sue Echelmeier, 18, Higginsville, Mo.

My favorite program is "Kung Fu." Apart from an interest in Asian culture, I admire and try to live by the ancient Chinese philosophies.

—Jim Buddle, 17, W. Winfield, N.Y.

They have too many extremely poor programs which are not even entertaining, especially children's shows. TV programs have become too scientific, not just simple and happy.

—Steve Mautheus, 18, Troy, O.

The standard criticism that TV is very unrealistic is usually valid: when it is not unreal, the realism is so often negatively oriented and the positive things about life are ignored.

—Mary Mihalyi, 18, Burlington, Wis.

TV was a fantastic invention of bringing entertainment and education into the home. Freedom of speech is a constitutional right, yet on TV, if something unliked is said, it is censored or cut out.

—Susan Rainey, 15, Toledo, O.

I don't watch TV.

—Susan Stefan, 16, McLean, Va.

I have no criticism of TV.

—Becky Wiseman, 17, Hillsboro, Tex.



## M\*A\*S\*H

"M\*A\*S\*H" is one of the most genuinely funny shows on TV. Without being afraid to approach serious topics, it demonstrates that humor is God's gift for bearing pain.

—Barry Gehm, 18, Lebanon, Ill.

"M\*A\*S\*H" is my favorite because the dialogue is hysterical, the actors work together well, and the plot has value.

—Joni Esser, 16, Clearwater, Fla.

I love the jokes Trapper and Hawkeye pull. Radar's sixth sense is far-out. The entire show is a riot.

—Lydia Norton, 15, Salt Lake City, Utah

I like the satiric humor on "M\*A\*S\*H," and their more serious moments reflect my feelings about killing and war in general.

—Shirley Ankenman, 18, Norton, Kans

"M\*A\*S\*H" looks at serious problems and makes fun of people who take themselves too seriously.

—Cindy Pearson, 18, Northfield, Minn

I wish TV could be more informative as well as entertaining, a little more humorous and less violent!!

—Joni Esser, 16, Clearwater, Fla.

I am tired of so many "super-cop" and "super-detective" shows. Without realizing it, TV is capitalizing on violence and "making crime pay."

—Bev Suko, 16, Custer, S.D.

Current TV economics and production requirements in the U.S. make it nearly impossible to produce consistently high-quality programs.

—Barry Gehm, 18, Lebanon, Ill.

The commercials! They are monotonous, repetitious, incredibly stupid, and make one believe that the entire American public is worried about dirty rugs and bathroom bowls. I think there are better things to worry about in this day and age.

—Jean Lischer, 16, St. Louis, Mo.

I almost never watch TV. The only reason I watch TV is for the news or a movie I am interested in.

—Keith B. Bishop, 19, Guilford, Conn.

There is very little realism involved in TV, and often violence is glorified along with evil.

—Billy Allen, 16, Charlotte, N.C.

Too many shows with no true humor or those which have no insight at all.

—Candy Wagahoff, 17, Boise, Ida.

It is the largest supporter of hypocrisy. Schools and churches do their best to teach peace and understanding over against crime and violence, but crime and violence are all one sees on TV.

—Chris Schweninger, 16, Geneseo, Ill.

Oftentimes the specials are on too late for younger children to stay up. For instance, the birth of a baby on ABC's "Wide World of Entertainment" was on at 11:30 p.m.—too late even for me. We had school the following day.

—Linda Kruger, 18, San Diego, Calif.

That they show so much junk. For example, one series is good, they duplicate it; "Mannix" is popular, so we have "Barnaby Jones," "Toma," "Kojak," etc., etc., etc.

—Eric Strain, 16, Chagrin Falls, O.

It is always there to keep people (children especially) from doing other things, i.e. gardening, practicing an instrument, reading, etc.—it's easy and mindless—sometimes harmful.

—Sharon Sullens, 19, Baltimore, Md.

# SMILE! YOU'RE ON TV NEWS!

*By Lewis Archibald*

The continuing furor over the Watergate investigation has had some interesting sidelights—not the least of these are the charges made by the Nixon Administration and other top officials that the media in general, and the TV networks in particular, are biased in their reporting of the news. This “reverse spotlight,” which has called into question the believability of even such established figures as Walter Cronkite, has also pointed up a number of problems in the way TV generally covers the news. Some of these difficulties are the clear results of corporate decisions, others are built into the whole process of TV news reporting and are unavoidable. With TV news becoming increasingly the sole source of information for the average American, it is important to examine some of these

built-in matters so that you know what you're getting and what you may be missing every time you flick on that switch at six o'clock.

In fact, the main lure of TV has always been that all you had to do was flick that switch to have the world at your fingertips. If you don't like what's on, turn the knob to something else. Whole industries live in fear of that turned knob. Because of it, ratings go down, sponsors quit and shows leave the air as symbolic bankrupts. The eternal rat race of every show on television is to keep your hand away from that dial until the show is over.

It's a rat race the news people must run too. They compete not only with other TV news shows, but in most cases with non-news shows as well. And, since the news stays fundamentally the same for all three networks in whatever city, the news people have become trapped in the

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Lewis Archibald is a New York free-lancer who has written for *Show* magazine and frequently writes for *YOUTH*.



The presence of TV newspeople at the Senate Watergate Committee hearings provided historic opportunity for public involvement in our government's proceedings.

same keep-'em-happy entertainment binds as the other TV shows.

There are three basic elements of TV news shows: the visual emphasis that must be given to any story since this is *television*, the time allotted to tell the story on the air, and the involvement of the newsperson's personality in the final result.

## IT MUST LOOK GOOD ON FILM

The first element—the need for

visualization—also contains the basic difference between TV reporting and newspaper journalism. Newspaper reporters must get all the facts they can. TV reporters must get all the facts they can *on film*. Which leads to several problems.

A primary problem is that there are too many important stories which you just cannot do well on film. For example, a Supreme Court decision which could send shock waves

across the country is still basically just a piece of paper in terms of visualization. Most investigative reporting such as that done on the Watergate break-in is reporting that of necessity requires a hush-hush nature that won't withstand all those cameras and lights. A particularly good example of a non-visual story was last spring's biggest event, the publication of President Nixon's tape transcripts. The conversations themselves turned out to contain some of the most interesting examples of political thinking ever released, but there was just no way TV could adequately cover that story.

Faced with non-visual stories like the above, plus a large number of non-visual stories with less importance, TV's usual reaction is to somewhat slough them off with a quick announcement and no attention of any depth. This leaves the newspeople free to concentrate on what they can do really well, stories that already have such an amount of action and movement in them that they readily provide their own entertainment and excitement: disaster stories, rocket launchings, street parades, demonstrations and the like. That's what has always shown TV in its finest hour. Several years ago when the three main issues were the Vietnam war, the moon shot program and the splintering economy, you never heard too much about the economy. It just wasn't very visual.

This leads to a question of pictures versus print in terms of effectiveness.

While pictures certainly have the greater immediacy, a more stunning impact than anything print can achieve (witness the live on-camera shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald), print is still the more adaptable of the two. There is no picture that words cannot describe at least in an adequate fashion. But where do you find a picture that expresses say, the Gettysburg Address? That's the problem the TV networks have to face every night. In doing so, the emphasis and the values often get messed up.

Another problem with even those stories TV can cover well is the presence of TV itself. One reporter with a notebook usually can't do much to change a situation and thus stands a pretty fair chance of being able to report on it capably without affecting it. A TV reporter who arrives with a soundperson, a cameraperson and heaven knows how much equipment is quite another matter. Many a college demonstration a few years ago didn't even bother to start until after the TV trucks had arrived.

The question then becomes: Is TV covering something or causing it, and if the latter's so, then how really newsworthy is their coverage?

It goes even deeper than that. People may express themselves somewhat freely to a newspaper reporter because she or he is only writing it down; the invasion of your privacy isn't complete. But when a TV camera is facing you, it's seeing all you've got, and the chances are that you'll react differently than usual. Who



Reporters were criticized for not seeking out the facts, but waiting to be spoon-fed with information during pre-scheduled interviews after the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst.

## WITH TV NEWS BECOMING THE MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE AVERAGE CITIZEN, IT IS IMPORTANT TO EXAMINE WHAT YOU'RE GETTING

doesn't want to look good on television? The great irony of TV news is that sometimes the presence of a TV camera can be enough to completely subvert the news it was after.

### ENOUGH TIME TO REPORT

Then there is the second element of time—the time required to prepare a story; the time it's allotted on the air; the time you're given to digest it, as well as the rest of the telecast. Because news shows are just so long, this means that on a day when a lot happened, minor items that may still be important get shunted aside while major items may be trimmed of most detail. Whereas on a day when not

much happened, a lot of things can get blown up a bit. This also means that nothing can really get treated with much depth. Just about all stories go out without the accompanying detail that sometimes contains the story's real meat and perspective. Furthermore, although television reporters often work on the same daily-assignment basis as most newspaper reporters, they work with film and sound which require editing, and they still have to write their own narration and put it all together. This involves a lot of other people and consequently cuts down on the time which TV reporters can be out on the streets doing their job.

But possibly the most serious problem is one of pace. You can read a newspaper at your leisure, skipping items till later, going back to re-read some particularly important story. Not so with TV. They demand that you march to their drumming. If you're busy when the news comes on and can't get to it, too bad. You'll have to wait until the more abbreviated late-night report. And you must also consume TV news virtually at one gulp. If you don't really understand something at first hearing, that's all you're going to get. As a result, TV newsmen try to be as direct and simple as possible, and none of us really picks up a lot of what they say in that half hour because it all goes by so fast.

### THE PERSONALITY CULT

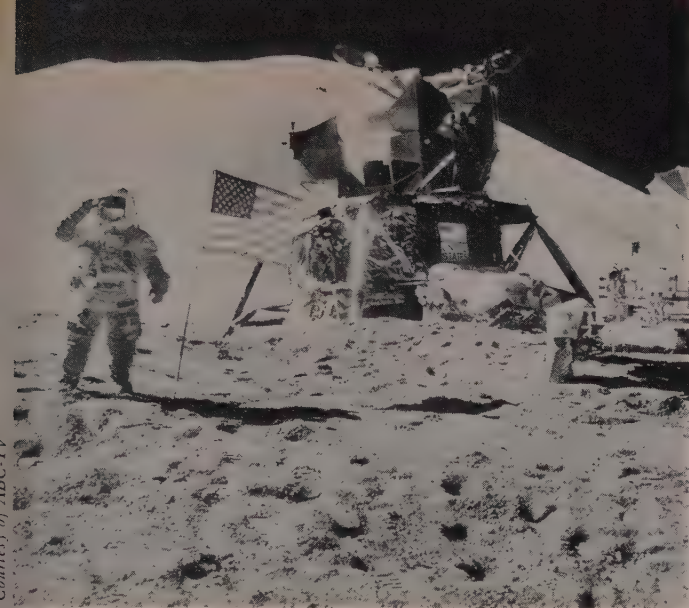
Finally there is the third element of the personalities who report the TV news. On a newspaper you seldom know who the writers are unless they are critics or commentators, people who are paid to give their opinions. The other people are rather faceless, and deservedly so. Even when they get a by-line and even when it's a by-line you recognize, you still don't really know the person behind it. Nor should you. If the personality of the writer gets between you and the news, then he or she is not a reporter anymore.

But this is just what happens on TV. Television has been accused of manipulating the news, and sometimes when you watch all those super-cute (or, lately super-ethnic) corre-

spondents posed prettily against the story they're covering, it seems quite possible. They're literally standing between you and what's supposed to be important, so that it's hard to say whether their presence isn't changing that story into something else.

Add to this the presence of an anchorman, especially on the local level. Ted Baxter, the anchorman on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" is supposed to be a caricature, but all too often he looks like the plain unvarnished truth when you compare him to the typical glib and glossy anchormen around the country, seldom deigning to cover a story themselves. But producers have learned from bitter experience that the wave of their hair, the shine on their teeth and the sex appeal in their vocal cords can make the difference between a Number One-rated TV news show which brings in all the fat commercial contracts and a show far down in the ratings.

In the last few years one more element of personality has threatened to destroy the integrity and coherence that should be at the base of any news show. It's called "Happy News"—a situation where the entire news staff are supposed to be great friends. They joke around a lot on the news and, in fact, they end up playing carefully rehearsed comedy roles instead of straightforwardly giving the news. The weatherperson always becomes the fall guy, the anchorman becomes the high potentate and purveyor of complete wi-



The first moonwalk was a monumental moment in history recorded by TV for millions on earth to see as it was taking place.

## TELEVISION HAS ALWAYS BEEN BEST WHEN IT'S BEEN FARTEST AWAY FROM THAT NEWSROOM, COVERING ON-THE-SPOT LIVE EVENTS

dom. And, most important, everyone yuks it up on "Happy News." The kicker is that this is apparently what audiences want. The "Happy News" teams have invariably done so well that most of the other stations have started including all sorts of inane chatter among their correspondents, chatter that usually takes up enough time for another news story.

You may have noticed that I've been comparing TV news to newspaper journalism as if the latter were the absolute ideal in reporting. It's not, particularly if you remember those rages of yellow journalism that flourished through the 50's. Still, the comparison holds, for in many ways

TV news has got the idea that it must emulate the papers. This is ridiculous when you consider that the total amount of copy and pictorial information provided in a full hour and a half of local and national newscasting wouldn't fill any more than three pages of an average-sized newspaper.

Many a local station has recently hired reviewers to cover the lively arts. Unfortunately they have so little time to do so on the air that it seldom constitutes more than a thumbs up-thumbs down reaction. The networks are also now giving more time to political and social commentaries but once again the time is so short that all commentary tends to become

merely a yea-nay vote on some issue. And lately some network shows ("The CBS Evening News" for one) and a lot of local shows have gone for a sort of newsroom set where the anchorman sits in the midst of a lot of cluttered desks and chairs and there's always a typewriter or a teletype machine clicking softly in the background. The forced atmosphere of what everyone thinks a city newsroom is like is definitely present.

### ALIVE, IN-DEPTH COVERAGE

But when you stop and think about it, television news has always been best when it's been farthest away from that newsroom—when it's been covering on-the-spot live events like rocket launchings, the first steps on the moon, the political conventions, and impeachment hearings.

Another example is the range of documentaries that the late Edward R. Murrow and company used to do, documentaries that not only pinpointed national disgraces and dangers but graphically proved them as only a picture can do. Many of these programs comprised the old CBS series, "See It Now;" seldom has a show been better named, or less interested in merely emulating newspaper practices.

Some vestiges of that old spirit remain in TV news today. Documentaries are only intermittently scheduled now but a good proportion of them still hit hard. On the CBS "60 Minutes" series, Mike Wallace specializes in playing a devil's advocate.

He'll take an exceedingly tough issue and then beard each proponent in the controversy with the toughest questioning around. Watching his "guests" squirm and speak off the top of their heads recalls some of that old Edward R. Murrow excitement.

There have been some other worthwhile news innovations in recent years. Several local stations across the country have started expanding their early evening telecasts to two hours in an effort to better cover local issues. The Public Broadcasting System carries once a week "Washington Week in Review" upon which a number of D.C. correspondents sit down and discuss what's been going on, often adding insights that the rigid structure of network news didn't allow them to develop.

But there are problems even here. PBS tried to set up a few programs similar to "Washington Week" on some of its local stations but has largely had to abandon them for lack of money. "60 Minutes" is considered so very important by CBS that it is regularly cancelled when a sports special runs too long and isn't on at all during the entire fall football season. Those documentaries that do run seldom attract much in the way of sponsorship and are invariably scheduled at the lowest possible viewing periods available. NBC's favorite time to take on all the issues of the world is Sunday night at 10:00.

And seldom do the networks or their news departments within them give much consideration to consolidating



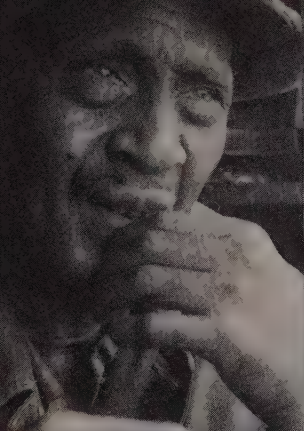
TV documentaries can and should take us to places where we'll probably never go—in this case the streets of the People's Republic of China.

## DOCUMENTARIES ON TV CAN NOT ONLY EXPLORE PROBLEMS IN DEPTH, BUT CAN GRAPHICALLY PROVE THEIR POINTS AS ONLY A PICTURE CAN DO

some of those things within their nightly newscasts. Why not a Mike Wallace investigation once a week on "The CBS Evening News"? Why can't some of those nicely informal chats between correspondents that ABC puts on around midnight every now and then be incorporated once in a while into their nightly news?

Nor are the local and national networks really to blame for this. It would be nice to see them as ogres, but they really can't be called much more than panderers. They obey the ratings and, on the whole, the ratings obey us. We're really getting just about what we've asked for. We watch the "Happy News" stations in droves

and, presto, clowns invade news bureaus everywhere. We don't watch the documentaries because a James Bond flick is on or golly, I've gotta see this episode of "The Waltons" and so the networks wonder if they should make news specials that nobody's going to see. The one thing TV news does much better than newspaper journalism is to reflect the tastes of its public. We're not getting a better survey of the news on TV because we've already proved that we don't want it. But if we at least recognize the limitations of TV news for what they are, we do stand a chance of picking up some helpful information each night. □



DOES  
THE  
MEDIA  
GET  
YOUR  
MESSAGE  
?



# MEDIA WATCHING

## KEEPING STATIONS HONEST

*By Susan M. Grant*

"People *do* have a voice," asserts Veronica Jefferson, 23-year-old Field Services Representative for the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, "but a lot of them just sit back and watch or listen to the media, not knowing that if there aren't community programs on that they can benefit from, they can hassle it. They just accept it and don't realize that they can actually change it."

Veronica, who is a recent political science graduate of Long Island University, has spent the past year working with the Office of Communication in a struggle to help community groups become aware of and exercise their rights.

What if your group (determined by age, sex, ethnic background, etc.) is sufficiently large to constitute a sizeable minority in your community, but you seldom or never see anyone or anything on TV that represents you or presents material of special in-

terest to you? What if all the persons who manage and perform on your local stations are members of groups other than yours? Can you do anything about this? Or is TV a closed issue—something you can only turn on or off, but never hope to change?

You may not know it, but TV, with all its power to influence and persuade, does not belong to the broadcasters, but to *you*. The broadcast spectrum is one of our nation's most valuable and important natural resources—but it is also limited. There are only just so many frequencies available in the spectrum, and those people who operate these frequencies, control all broadcast communications in the United States. So much concentrated power demands responsibility to and regulation by the public—by you. It is for this reason that TV and radio broadcasters must apply for a license renewal to the Federal Communications Commission

(FCC) every three years. And it is for this reason that their application for license renewal must be on public display and must contain a statement of their intention to serve community interests (including the results of their own survey of community needs). If you or any concerned local group feel that the broadcasters in your area are not serving community interests and needs, you can and should challenge the stations involved.

How can you do this? That's where Veronica and the Office of Communication come in. The first step is to form a citizen group who have common complaints or concerns about the stations involved. Many times such groups will try to negotiate with the station in question before seeking outside help. When they discover they are getting nowhere fast, the Office of Communication hears from them. "A community group writes to us, giving us their reasons why they feel that their local station is not responsive to community needs," says Veronica. "Then they ask for information on the station's license, the renewal applications. They often don't realize that they can just walk into the station and get it. This is public information.

"Then the group communicates with the station, and we assist them by reading and analyzing the license renewal application which the station filed with the FCC. And we let them know that a community group is considering chal-

lenging their license during the upcoming renewal period."

The task has only begun at this point, however. The next step is monitoring—a process which involves the whole group. With a form provided by the Office of Communication, they watch or listen to local programming on the station in question. They then answer questions pertaining to the frequency of appearance, and manner of persons of situations which relate to their group's concerns. (They might for instance be studying a race, sex, or age bias in the station's programming.) "You have to listen, watch and pay very close attention," affirms Veronica. "We try to show people where they've been missing things — not really watching the show in regard to who's appearing, how often they appear and what the issues are. Everything you can catch, you write on your monitoring form. We also tape each show at the same time, to have a complete record of what appeared. Usually there are 20 to 25 people in the monitoring groups so that you get different opinions of what's going on. And from that you discern what a show is about.

"Actually it's important that you pick up different things, because these monitoring projects are used as evidence against the station to show discrepancies in their license renewal forms [the public statement of their policies] and their actual programming," concludes this young woman who hopes to go into the field

communications law.

Stations are normally monitored for about a week to get a feeling for their overall intent. FCC policy demands not so much that individual programs suit all community groups, but that the overall programming is representative and responsive to the community as a whole. It is left to the individual broadcaster to determine public needs and desires. This situation requires complete objectivity from monitoring groups.

"People working in our monitoring

groups have to be objective," Veronica states, "and many of them find they're not looking at a show objectively, and evaluating it for what it's worth. They have preconceived biases. Objectivity is most important; if our data-gathering reflects a bias, it loses much of its power."

Monitoring groups do not usually evaluate the content or intent of network programs. Since these are national shows they are monitored in New York; although individual broadcasters are responsible for

**IF THE PROGRAMMING OF YOUR LOCAL STATION  
REFLECTS A RACE, SEX, OR AGE BIAS, YOU MAY HAVE  
REASON TO CHALLENGE ITS LICENSE RENEWAL.**



Veronica Jefferson works with members of a local group who are unhappy about the TV programming in their area.

A former president of the Baptist Youth Fellowship at her own church, Emmanuel Baptist Church of Brooklyn, N.Y., Veronica feels that the churches can provide one avenue through which young people might involve themselves in the television field. "I wasn't introduced to communications in my earliest school days, and I regret it now," she says. "It's a field that young people should get into, as early as possible."



*everything* they carry, be it advertising, network programs or local shows. "One exception to dealing with network shows is when a station is carrying too many network programs, and not enough local coverage," adds Veronica. "Then we make a complaint about that."

When the necessary data has been compiled, the group then begins negotiations with station management. If there are discrepancies between what the station has publicly said it would do and what it is doing (either in terms of its programming or its employment policies) then the community group has a clear point of leverage. It is also possible that they can challenge a station's determination of what exactly constitutes the "public interest" by producing

evidence that their segment of the community was not consulted prior to the last license renewal.

In any event, station management often begins to reach some agreements with the group at this time. It is recommended that a community group involved in this type of challenge and negotiation with a TV or radio station avail themselves of the services of a public-spirited attorney who can help the group through some of the legal complexities that arise at this point. If it develops that the station is not open to change, it is at this time, usually just before the FCC renews the station's license, that a Petition to Deny that station its renewed license is filed by the community group. If the FCC finds sufficient evidence cited by the challenging group,

hopefully hearings will be scheduled and both groups will present their arguments. The outcome might well be that the broadcaster is either ordered to change his methods of operation, or is denied a renewal of his license, thus opening the station for operation by more responsible groups.

How long does this process take? "It seems to take forever," says Veronica. "Sometimes it can take a year before you file a Petition to Deny. You might be negotiating with a station for a year. And then for

the FCC to act—it can take anywhere from a day to forever. People who want to challenge local stations have to be patient and stick with it."

Isn't this picture a gloomy one? "Not at all," affirms Veronica with a smile. "In at least 75 percent of all the cases we've worked on, we've won, either through negotiation or through a legal challenge. And it's getting better, because more groups are becoming aware. The public is really waking up." □

## TELEVISION, WITH ALL ITS POWER TO INFLUENCE AND PERSUADE, DOES NOT BELONG TO THE BROADCASTERS, BUT TO YOU

If you want to find out more about community involvement with TV practices and programming, here are some resources you may find helpful.

Office of Communication  
United Church of Christ  
289 Park Avenue South  
New York, N.Y. 10010

Citizens Communications Center  
1816 Jefferson Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Citizens Committee  
for Broadcasting (NCCB)  
1145 Nineteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Action for Children's Television (ACT)  
33 Hancock Avenue  
Newton Centre, Mass. 02159

Stern Community Law Firm  
2005 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Community Relations Service  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

### USEFUL MATERIALS

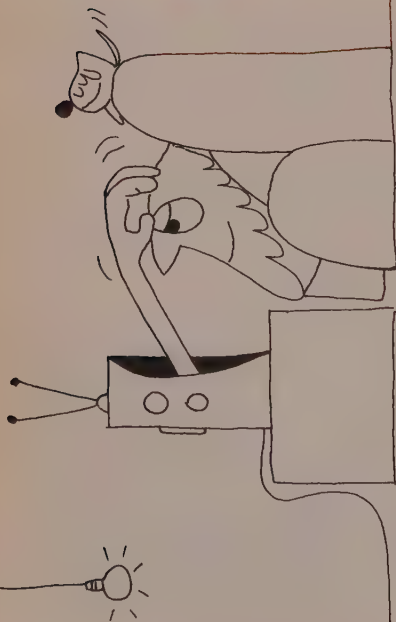
*Guide to Citizen Action in Radio and Television* by Marsha O'Bannon Prowitt, available from the Office of Communication, United Church of Christ.

*The Public in Broadcasting: A Procedure Manual*, available from the FCC.

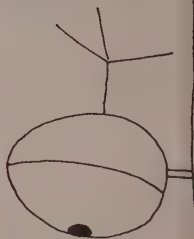
*Primer on Citizens Access to the Federal Communications Commission*, available from the Citizens Communication Center.

# THE MEDIA MESSAGE

A collection of transparencies  
by Doug Brunner



i can only  
stay  
awhile . . .



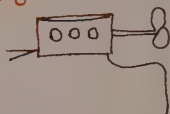
thought i'd  
come over  
and say  
hello . . .



draw up a  
chair and  
join me



we can talk  
during  
commercials



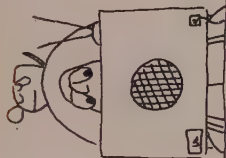
i'm sure  
glad there's  
equal time  
on tv



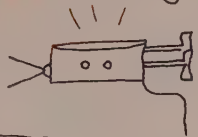
i heard one  
editorial  
that made  
me so angry  
i was ready  
to do  
something



then i heard  
the rebuttal  
and it  
sounded  
good too



now i'm  
back to  
normal



do you know  
what it's like  
to watch in  
color



the grass is  
orange, the  
sky is red and  
the people  
purple



color tv adjusts  
to your whims



the trouble  
with some of  
the blacks  
on tv is



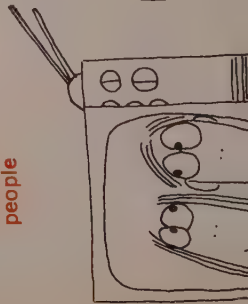
they don't  
offer a contrast



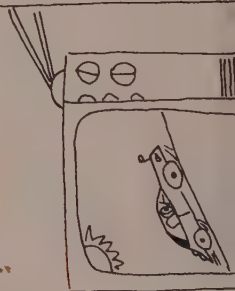
they blend in



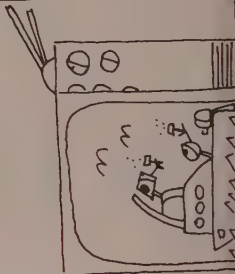
tv is the  
world of  
beautiful  
people



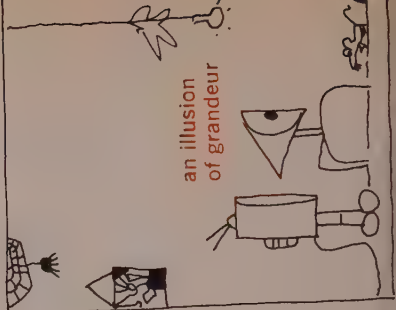
dazzling  
cars and  
houses



expensive  
taste



an illusion  
of grandeur



women have  
come a long  
way on tv



we used to be  
just beautiful  
sex objects



now we're  
smart,  
beautiful sex  
objects



i go out to  
play a game  
and there  
are hassles



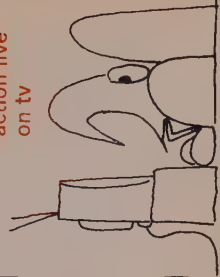
you get  
pushed  
around and  
sweat



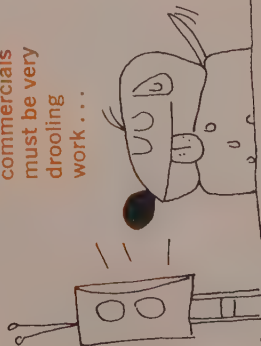
you come  
up against  
a lot of  
mean  
people



i'd rather  
watch the  
action live  
on tv



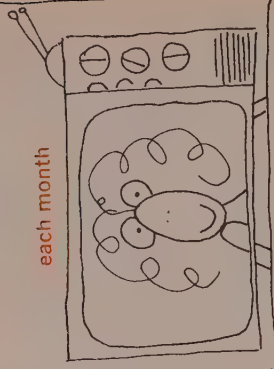
starring in  
one of those  
dog food  
commercials  
must be very  
drooling  
work...



as a public  
service this  
station will  
present ten  
minutes of  
good news...



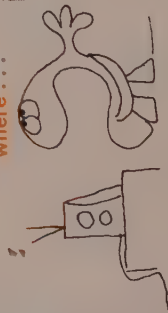
each month



one day  
you might  
wonder who  
the person  
on tv is  
that's  
running for office



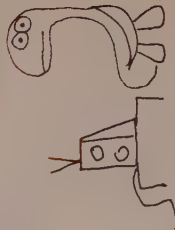
a week later  
you'd know  
them any-  
where...



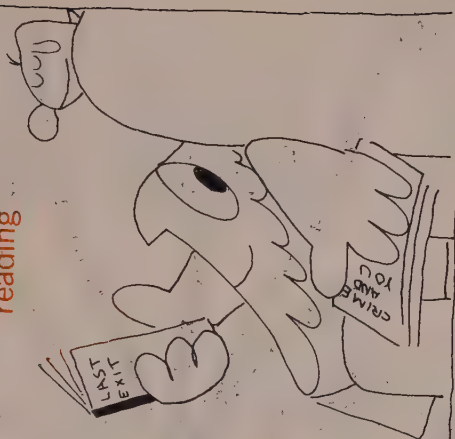
soon you  
know them  
so well  
you're  
ready to  
vote for  
them...



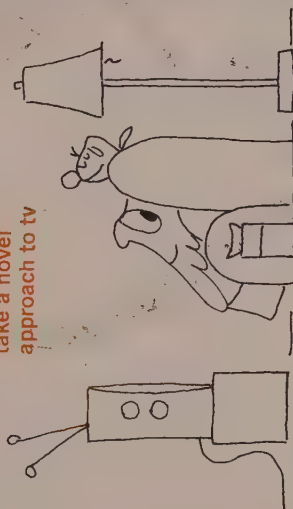
the new  
political  
machine...



reading



i've decided to  
take a novel  
approach to tv





# CABLE TV

## HERE IT COMES, READY OR NOT!

*By Everett C. Parker*

Let's imagine you become seriously ill and you're forced to stay home from school. But you don't want to miss those weeks of classroom work while you're home-bound. But, if we lived in a not-too-distant time, you could push a button at home and you could see and hear your class at school and your classmates could see and hear you at home.

Hard to imagine? Not if you know about the possibilities of two-way cable television.

Again, in that future day, suppose your home was hooked up to a regional cable system. You'd be able to stay in the comfort of your own living room, yet also be able to shop for clothing and food, read your own in-home print-out newspaper, make audio-video telephone calls, read a reference book on microfilm from the library, retrieve data from a community computer, discuss your opinions with your local politicians, look or train for a job, and attend a neighborhood meeting or a church gathering. All this at-home conveni-

ence, in addition to sports, movies, theatre, ballet, music, educational features and even poetry readings for specialized audiences, at the flick of a switch.

Social scientists and educators have also dreamed of neighborhood cable TV stations, forums for minorities, hospitals linked to outlying health care centers, and lawyers fed legal briefs and doctors fed medical diagnoses stored in a central data bank.

But these are dreams! What is the immediate reality?

**WANTED: YOUTH WITH SOUL.** Because cable television is still a young enough phenomenon, there is yet time for those with a conscience to help shape it before it shapes us. Cable TV need not be like radio and television, whose general patterns of stereotyped entertainment and unimaginative programming are already

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Dr. Parker is Director of the Office of Communication, United Church of Christ.



set, limited by channel scarcity and the high price of air time, and aimed at an audience of middle-class, urban, young families whom the advertisers want most to reach. But cable is in danger of being dominated by commercial operators more interested in profit than public service. What they are selling is the better picture, better color, more and more entertainment.

The full range of possibilities for cable will not be made available in your community unless concerned citizens insist on it. In this fight to influence the future of cable TV, young people are assets because you are quick to learn the necessary tools. You have ideals and enthusiasm for a cause, and you have the imagination for fresh thinking. We need some new technologists, new communicators, and new dreamers. We need to move beyond the hangups of corporate and government officials who cannot think beyond where they are now. It takes young people to say, "Hey, you old fogies who have been in cable for years, move over and let some of us come in with our new ideas."

WHAT IS CABLE TV? CATV, or Community Antenna Television, was born in the 1940's to fill the demand for television from communities located in valleys or behind mountains where it was impossible to receive a clear television signal through a regular home antenna. The pioneering businessman erected a master antenna on a site high above the community to pick up television signals and fed

them to homes through a coaxial cable strung on telephone poles and placed underground in conduits.

Then, promoters began moving the cable into towns and cities where TV signals were unsatisfactory or where viewers were looking for an opportunity to receive more stations. Installation and monthly service fees guaranteed that the operators' initial investment would be quickly met and that they would make a regular profit with little effort.

When it was realized that a single coaxial cable could carry a large number of services and that the new medium could offer much more than just a clear picture and a few more programs, new cable companies sprang up overnight. Promoters pressured town and city governments for quick action on franchise applications, catching some off guard by offering the municipality a healthy fee for use of its streets and poles.

With these changes, CATV became more properly known as "cable television." As a result, there are now 3100 cable TV systems in operation in 5770 U.S. communities serving 8.1 million subscribers, or 12.5 per cent of all U.S. homes with television.

The rate and quality of future growth of cable TV will depend on technological progress, the economic of expansion, local and federal government policies, the outcome of public versus private control, and the will of the people to make their voice heard.

**CHANNELS, JUKEBOXES AND BUTTONS.** The presently-used coaxial cable can carry 12 to 24 channels into a private home. But technological know-how already makes it possible to forecast as many as 100 channels going into each home within a matter of years.

Another system, not yet fully developed, is called a "switched system." Each home cable subscriber can dial the desired program from a "jukebox of selections." Although it is necessary to have only one channel in this system, potentially there are many more programming choices stored in the "jukebox" than the more traditional, multi-channel system could offer. With such a system, attached to a computer, the subscriber would have access to a vast library of information.

Other possibilities include receiving mail and telegrams, newspapers and magazines through a device attached to the set.

Right now the simplest two-way cable system is the "digital response," where, through a series of buttons in your home, requests can be sent to the cable center. You may be able to place orders with a department store, register your opinion on community issues, or operate a computer. Ulti-

mately, two-way video may be possible, though many question whether people will want it.

**FROM COPPER TO LASER.** Skeptics of cable TV point out, however, that with the shortage of copper, we would never be able to cover the entire country with coaxial cables. But technology has already projected a replacement for the copper cable—the transmission of TV signals by laser rays beamed onto a glass fiber, called "fiber-optics." These light beams could be sent from ground stations to satellites and back, thus covering the entire globe with cable TV, or perhaps then we would call it a Laser-Satellite TV.

In any case, some form of multi-channel, two-way, audio-visual communications system is on its way into your home and community. It means that you will not only be able to *receive* signals over the cable—or laser—but also be able to *send* them. Finally, it means that such a system connecting every home—a "wired nation"—could become the primary means of being in touch with the world outside your home. These, then, are some of the truly revolutionary possibilities for cable TV.

**SUCH A SYSTEM OF UNLIMITED CAPACITY CONNECTING EVERY HOME COULD REPLACE ALL OTHER MODES OF COMMUNICATION—POSTAL SERVICES, TELEPHONE, RADIO AND COMMERCIAL TV**

## WHAT IS THE PRICE WE PAY?

If there is no cable TV in your area yet, it is probably because the potential owner-operator does not yet feel cable TV can be financially successful where you live. It costs lots of money to install cable systems.

Those who favor private, commercial ownership of cable systems believe that the profit motive, with proper safe-guards, may be the best guarantee of efficient operation. It is possible for the local governing body to hold out for maximum service to the public as a condition for the granting of a franchise.

Some individuals and organizations advocate cable ownership by a non-profit, community corporation. Such a corporation could provide all the service promised by private cable operators and more. Money that would normally be drawn off as profit can be plowed back into the operation to reduce rates to subscribers or to provide funds for community programming and information services.

Municipal ownership is another alternative. A city could operate the system as a non-profit enterprise, under a non-political cable advisory board, similar to a board of education.

A community association or coalition of community groups is another possibility.

But whether a non-profit corporation or a private operator gets the franchise, there should be an officially-recognized, independent watchdog agency to see that the cable operator carries out his promises about pro-

gramming and facilities and that the public has access to the system. Another important function of such a community board would be to develop and encourage experimental public service programming. Youth might well be represented on such a board and can certainly make valuable contributions of time and talent.

**EVERYBODY ON BOARD.** Many municipalities have acted on cable franchises hastily and have failed to require operators to provide public services. But even after a franchise has been granted, concerned citizens can work together to persuade operators to expand their services. If persuasion doesn't work, it's still possible to work for revision of existing agreements.

Concerned citizens recognize that without government regulation, the public may be left out in the cold in the development of cable in the days ahead. The federal government may set additional standards. State governments may impose additional requirements. But the day-to-day regulation is done locally. Vigorous, informed involvement of youth in the developmental stages and in the surveillance of the operations of cable TV will help it live up to its great potential.

How is it living up to its potential in the communications capital of the U.S.—New York City? Two private companies, Sterling Manhattan and Teleprompter, divide Manhattan. In addition to nine regular television channels, each has an "origination"

channel for its own programs. These "originations" usually are nothing more than stock market reports, news-wire, movies, and a few local programs. One channel carries foreign

language programs; two "public access" channels are available to non-profit organizations and individuals, two still unused are available to the city government.



IN THE FUTURE WE WILL NOT ONLY BE ABLE TO  
RECEIVE SIGNALS OVER THE CABLE—BUT WE WILL  
ALSO BE ABLE TO SEND THEM

In Colorado Springs, on the other hand, the city council recently revoked its contract with Teleprompter and issued a new franchise for a community-controlled cable system with a wide-range of public services.

Such a cable system may well prove a threat to "free" commercial television which presently dominates the field with its slick fare addressed to a mass audience. Experts believe that cable and broadcast television will exist side by side for some time to come. Protection of over-the-air television is built into the rules adopted by the Federal Communications Commission. But the future almost certainly lies with cable.

In this period of cable development, all interested parties need to be careful that control is not centered in any one group, that high standards in programming and in equipment are set, and that money is invested in the best of communications technology and for the public interest.

**A CHANNEL FOR YOU.** The Federal Communications Commission requirement that cable companies of 3500 or more subscribers originate local programs is an opportunity for you. For new cable systems being built within a 35-mile radius of any of the top 100 urban centers, "public access" channels are being reserved in three categories: (1) for the public, (2) for education, (3) for local government. The public channel is available on a first-come, first-served basis. And that is where you can

put your talents to use and let your social and moral concerns be known.

The "public access" channels may become a valuable medium for freedom of expression in our increasingly-controlled society. However, there are those who worry about its misuse. For instance, what about violations of the right to privacy, or incitements to riot, or consumer frauds, or the showing of obscene movies? Will there be guarantees of equal time for differing points of view?

At present the FCC's "Fairness Doctrine" and "Equal Time" rules help to deter these abuses. In addition, each local governing board should be responsible for setting standards and acting as a watchdog to avoid abuses.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?** Here are a few ideas to get you started:

1. Check with your local government to see at what stage, if any, cable TV is in your community. Accordingly, seek the support of a group of fellow citizens to insure the best system for your own situation.

2. If you've already got cable, check with the local cable programmer to see how you or your group can help provide programs. You might organize a group of interested young people to work on this as a hobby, and/or community service activity.

3. Learn to use video equipment. Don't get the idea that only professionals are able to produce material of suitable quality. If you cannot bo

row equipment, your group could buy a portable video camera and recorder for around \$2000. Get out of the studio and into the streets. Don't hesitate to ask for technical help and equipment from your local cable operator, and be sure any equipment you buy is compatible with that of your local cable center. Seek the financial and moral support of community organizations. Remember that your video expression does not have to be like a commercial show, but you should learn to use the medium skillfully in order to reach an audience. For example, a group of 50 teenagers in Newburgh, N.Y., produced a 90-minute tape daily for their public access channel. The shows ranged from interviews with local people to a documentary on peace demonstrations to a series of humorous take-offs on TV advertising. Their work became a dramatic and inspiring influence for the total community.

4. Subscribe to *Cable Information Newsletter*, published by the Broadcasting and Films Commission, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027. The cost is ten dollars per year. It will keep you in touch with the latest cable and video developments and program ideas. Or write to the Office

of Communication, United Church of Christ, 289 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10010 for a copy of the booklet, "A Short Course in Cable."

5. Contact the communications office of your denomination for suggestions on what you can do and for suggestions for developing workshops for training people to be ready for cable when it hits your town.

6. Training in cable TV can be attained at a number of universities. Contact such universities, as well as those national organizations with expertise and concern in mass communications (see list on page 29). □



BECAUSE CABLE TV IS A NEW ENOUGH PHENOMENON,  
THERE IS STILL TIME TO HELP SHAPE IT BEFORE  
IT SHAPES US

# PRIME TIME COMMENTARY

When something has the enormous power to influence us that TV does, we're all bound to have opinions about it. There are undoubtedly as many ways of seeing TV and its influence as there are people who see TV. Here are some samples which might help you to find your own perspective.



Courtesy of ABC-TV

## A BLACK PERSPECTIVE

*In my early career, I played the young black militant. Then all of a sudden, I played black doctors and lawyers. I have never gotten to play an ordinary, everyday guy with a family, with problems. That's a part of black life that you never see on television. But then our black writers aren't used. How can you have a meaningful black production without a black writer? They say, "in the beginning is the word." Then where are our writers? But it seems that those in control want to decide who everyone is, what they should be, and how they should behave. So you have a stereotyped version of who everyone is.*

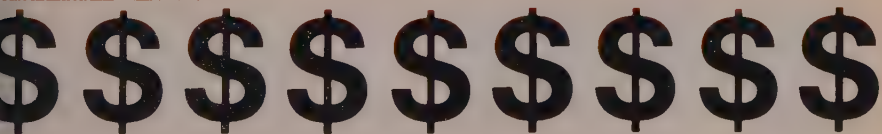
—Georg Stanford Brown, actor  
starring in "The Rookies"



## SOCIAL SIDE-EFFECTS OF A POPULAR SHOW

People ask me frequently, are you contributing to further bigotry or are you helping to erase bigotry with "All in the Family"? The answer I have to give is I don't know. To me, doing some

"good" means that we provide 30 minutes of entertainment. That's good enough. If there's more fallout, like my wife seeing a cancer specialist after our show where Edith discovered she had cancer, it's enough for me on that particular show. That's plenty. I don't expect anything more of it than 30 minutes of entertainment. I don't think it's going to erase 100 years of bigotry because we're exposing some bigoted facets to the world, or some new ideas. People ask this question: "What about the people who *like* Archie Bunker?" I say, "Well, if they're going to like him, we're not going to change that guy quickly, either." And certainly, it's a heavy burden to put on a 30-minute TV show. —*John Rich, former director, "All in the Family"*



## ACTORS' PAY

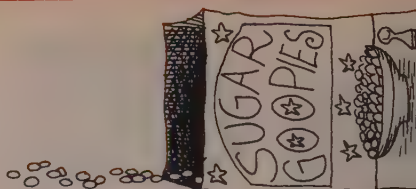
The average American doesn't think of the average actor as being concerned with such mundane matters as salary or rerun fees. After all, don't all actors drive around in expensive sports cars, live in Hollywood mansions, and sleep under fur bedspreads? The fact of the matter, though, is far from this glamorous image. Eighty-five percent of the

members of the Screen Actors Guild are unemployed all or most of the time; 76.4 percent earn less than the national poverty level of \$3500 per year and must moonlight as real-estate agents, carpenters, waitresses, etc. to survive. Only 3.4 percent make \$25,000 or more, and just 400 or so are making \$50,000 a year or more.

## SOCIAL PLUGOLA

*Television can sell ideas the way it can sell soap. I hope it will sell good ideas.*

—Sen. John O. Pastore (D-RI)



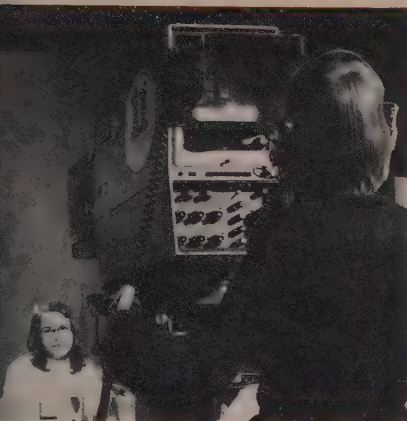
### BY THE KIDS FOR THE KIDS

"ZOOM" is the kind of thing that happens if you are at a summer camp and taps has blown and all of the adults have left and the kids start to giggle and laugh and tell jokes and talk about what they want to and there are absolutely no adults around.

"ZOOM" is, in fact, a 30-minute, national weekly magazine-of-the-air written for and by kids, and broadcast by WGBH-Boston for the Public Broadcasting System.

The really different thing about "ZOOM" is that it belongs to the kids. It's their show, and it's their original ideas and suggestions that make up the programs. "It's nonsense

to say 'ZOOM' is innovative," asserts Christopher Sarson, creator and former executive producer of the show. "It's nothing but kids playing games, rapping with each other, singing, dancing, being kids. There's nothing copyrightable about it. We don't even need writers, we rely on the kids—they mail in the ideas." And mail them in is just what they do—over 7000 letters each week. Those recipes, jokes, ideas, games, puzzles, etc. which aren't used on the air (with so many coming in each week, "ZOOM" received enough in 1972 alone to do shows for the next ten years!) might have been published in a catalog using the best of "ZOOM," by Random House.



KBYU-TV

## KID'S NEWS

"By giving young people a chance to gather, assemble and produce news, we feel we are providing them a great opportunity to learn the whole field of broadcast journalism," says Robert M. Wilson, production supervisor for "Kid's News" at the Brigham Young University-operated KBYU-TV, Provo, Utah.

Each week a class of young people spends about 40 hours per student getting ready for their own news show. The station's production crew and supervisors visit the school several times teaching them how to take still photographs, read broadcast copy, write stories, read cues and produce a half-hour news show.

## ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN

We have studied this area and concluded that advertising to children is unfair and irresponsible. It is misleading because children do not have the knowledge or experience to distinguish between fact and fiction in advertising.

Young people may not enter into contracts without adult assistance, are not permitted to drive an automobile until age 16, to vote until age 18, or to own a credit card until age 21. Yet, in the world of television, advertisers treat children as adults from the day they see their first program.

—Debbie First,

Action for Children's Television





PBS

## U.S. VERSUS BRITISH TV

*Probably it's no accident that most British productions play here on non-commercial TV. U.S. TV never cuts too deep. For the function of our TV system is not to raise questions, but to soothe doubts, to make quiescent consumers of us all.*

—Lee Winfrey, columnist

## A COMMERCIAL FANTASYLAND

*The majority of TV is full of fantasy and illusions of romance, wealth and social status, most often shown in commercials, particularly the ones aimed at the teen-aged audience. Considered to be the most gullible of the age groups, teens are targets of living color dreams about a handsome, blemishless David Cassidy giving his peaches-and-cream girlfriend a ride in his expensive sports car. After a romp in a field of daisies and butterflies they join the Pepsi people in a picnic of potato chips and soda pop. Such nonsense is irrelevant to real living. And boy-girl relationships are not the all-in-one-day adventures that TV makes them up to be. Also, thanks to the media, such exploitation of the so-called social diseases*

*known as acne, bad breath, frizzies and yellow teeth has led to mass paranoia. I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with being clean and neat, just that one thing leads to another and people get fussy ("Ho-hum mouth," "Dead-end kids," and so forth).*

—Jim Buddle, 17, W. Winfield, N.Y.

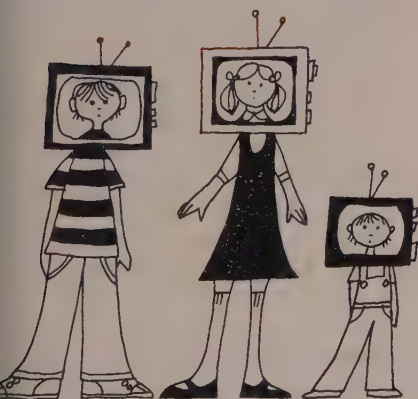


## ARE THOSE TV ADS FOR REAL?

For reasons ranging from the dollar gap created by inflation to the credibility gap created by Watergate, more and more companies that advertise on TV are looking for "real people" to do their selling for them. The buyers have, in effect, become the salesmen. Why the surge in real-people commercials? If any one word helps to explain the

trend, that word is "believability." Believability has always been the most highly desirable ingredient in advertising. But today, when everyone from the TV repairman down the street to the president in the White House is considered capable of ripping off the public, believability in advertising is more than desirable; it is essential.

—Fred Nassif,  
New York Times, June 30, 1974



## A HOME EDUCATOR, FOR BETTER OR WORSE

How are you at recall? Can you account for the approximately 15,000 hours you have already spent in front of a television set? A person 6 years of age, who began TV watching at age two and saw an average of three hours of programming a day, 365 days a year, has

watched a total of 15,310 hours; 4,000 hours more than the number of hours a high school graduate has spent in a classroom. The only single experience that has occupied more time than television is sleep.

Consider the effects of TV time on daily routine. Research proves that there is a difference between the television-dominated household and the non-television home. In a home where the television set looms large, there is less free play than in a home without television. The pre-television battle was to get the child into the house from outdoor games. Since the video boom the war has continued but the sides have changed. The battle cry is to get the child outside, away from the talking screen.

—Debbie First,  
Action for Children's Television

## THE MORAL OF TV PROGRAM PLANNING

"Ultimately, network programmers are guided only by the viewer ratings, because that's the only thing the advertisers understand," said a former top industry programmer, as quoted in *U.S. News & World Report*. "Network censors are not basically motivated by any great social conscience. They are motivated rather by what will be acceptable. They're trying to pacify federal agencies, religious groups, educational groups, moral critics of all kinds who are coming at them—and still put together entertainment which people will enjoy enough to keep them in business."

## A TEXTBOOK IN CRIME

"People definitely do get ideas for crimes from watching TV," said Boston's Police Commissioner Robert Di Grazia, as reported by the *National Enquirer*. "We had a horrible murder here where a girl was doused with gasoline and set afire. Only one day earlier there'd been a movie on TV called 'Fuzz' in which the same crime was shown."

Courtesy of NBC-TV



## TV'S NOT TO BLAME

*I'm suspicious of reasoning that crimes are committed in imitation of TV programs, because crime and terrible things have been happening for many years before television. I think television has been made a whipping boy far in excess of any guilt that it may have. We try not to be at all instructive. We go to elaborate lengths not to show people how, new ways of committing crimes or making bombs or beating up on other people or that sort of thing. We try very hard to avoid titillating the person who may get all excited by watching violence.*

—A CBS network executive  
in *Program Practices*

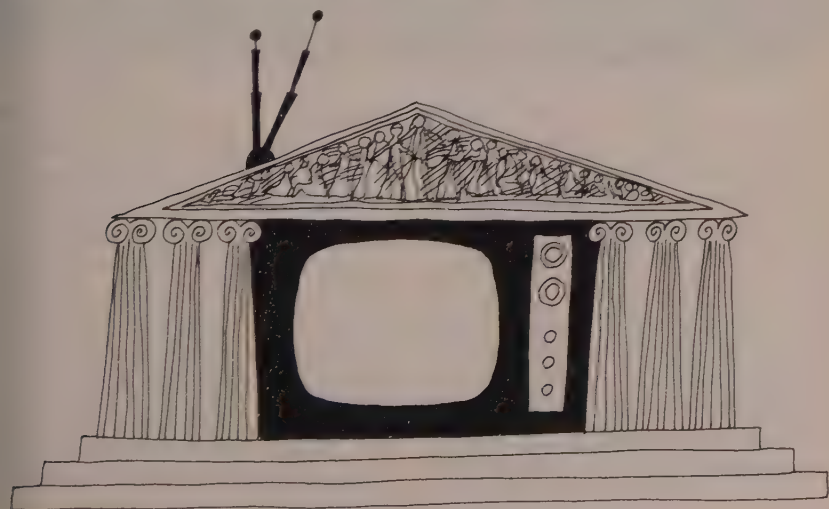
## BRITAIN'S OPEN UNIVERSITY

In 1963, when Britain's Prime Minister Harold Wilson contemplated the high cost of building new university structures and staffing them with professors, he asked, "Why not make a school that, by using TV and radio, could turn every home in the nation into a university? And why not open it to everyone on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of educational background?"

This unique idea has become the Open University of Britain's airwaves—an institution which is basically a correspondence course, but with a difference. For instance, demonstrations and lectures are brought to the student over the BBC network. Students can work alone if they want to or must, but they can also attend one of the 300 study centers established in schools around

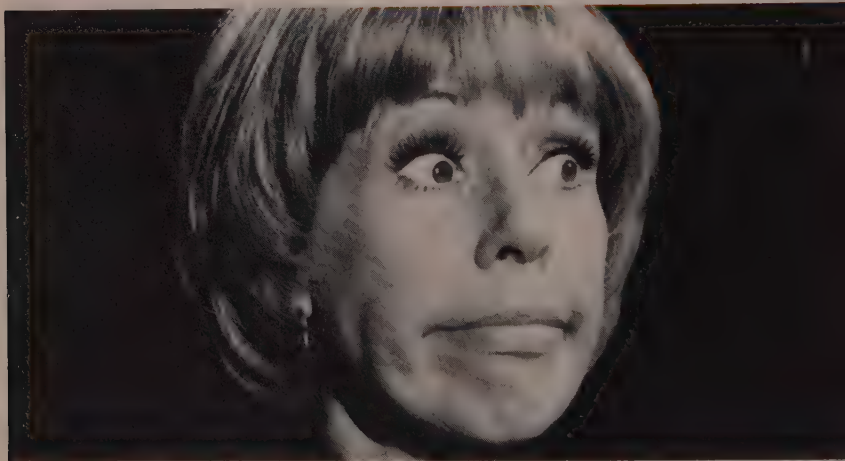
the country for those who don't have their own sets or want some companionship in their learning adventure. There is also a mandatory one-week summer school at the borrowed campuses and dormitories of traditional universities and colleges in the country.

The Open University has become the biggest university in Britain in size of student body (40,000) and one of the biggest publishers as well. One year after it began, the Open University awarded its first degrees to 867 students, many of whom had had some previous education. And even today, less than 30 percent of the students fail to complete their courses—a big improvement over the 50 percent university officials had expected to dropout when they began their unique learning experience.



# "HEY, WE'VE GOT A

*By Herman C. Ahrens, Jr.*



"Television is more demanding than either the stage or the movies," Carol Burnett says as we chat off camera during rehearsals for her weekly variety show. "If you do it right, television is the most professional and the most adult field of the performing arts," she continues. "There's no time in TV for displays of temperament or catering to the silly whims of a star or a semi-star. On Friday night when that light goes on and the audience is here, you have

to deliver something. It may not be a gem—many are not—because you only have four days to do them, but at least you do your best."

As we watch Harvey Korman and Tim Conway rehearsing a scene, she nods toward the stage, "I think Harvey is the best comic actor I've ever worked with. He comes up with instant characters, his timing is sensational, his instinct is always right, and he and I work very well together. I know when he's going to ad-lib a

# SHOW TO DO!"

All photos courtesy of CBS-TV



he knows when I am. But that's from seven years of working together."

Loud laughter interrupts us.

"Look at Tim!" Carol shouts in delight, pointing to a hilarious trick Tim is doing.

"That's incredible!" she laughs and then applauds. "He's a genius! His mind is constantly working. Then when he gets in front of the audience, he'll go forever. He has more courage to get that audience laughing. He'll try new things all the time."

"Is it spontaneous?"

"Not always. Sometimes he'll get an idea on Tuesday or Wednesday, keep it to himself, and then spring it on Friday during the live taping."

"Does he especially try to break up Harvey?"

"Yes, he loves to. Tim gives him that look—and poor Harvey! Well, I'm just as bad. It kills me. One time I walked off camera because I was doubled up. Tim kept going. Finally I came back after I gained my com-

posure. You don't want to laugh because you want to keep the sketch true. Breaking up can be phony, but when Tim breaks you up, it's usually with a very ingenious piece."

Noticing some of her crew wearing "Burnett's Bums" jackets with a cartoon of the charwoman on them, I ask her how the charwoman got started.

"Years ago I heard a disc jockey say that David Rose's song, 'The Stripper,' was the housewife's favorite record. I started to visualize—gosh, a housewife during her work to 'The Stripper' with bumps and grinds. And then instead of doing it as a housewife, I took it a step further and made her a charwoman. I did it first on the road and then on a TV special. It was a charwoman going into an empty burlesque theatre at night pretending she was Gypsy Rose Lee. That's how it started."

"Do you feel the charwoman is a symbol of your show?"

"Actually, I don't," Carol replies. "It's just the character I've done the longest and people identify with it. And we have used the cartoon character of her to open our show. I don't do her as often as I used to because it's so hard to come up with a good pantomime that means something. It's easy to find a good song, to sit on a bucket and sing, but the reason for singing that song has to be valid. When some of the songs became forced, I tuned out."

"But on the Australian show, I loved that premise of the charwoman

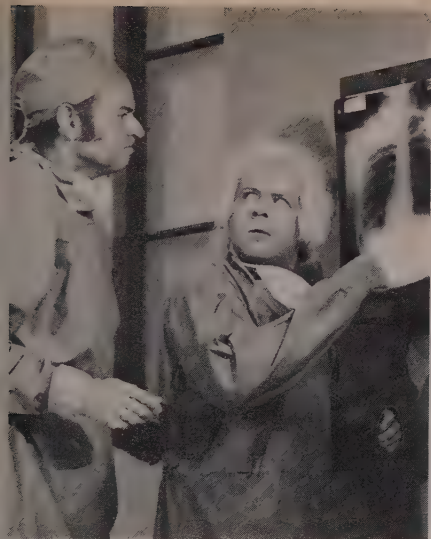
pretending, hoping, visualizing herself to be a ballerina. Another go one was with Gloria Swanson, where she and I did a silent movie together."

"How does Gloria Swanson feel about take-offs you've done on her?"

"She loves it," Carol responds warmly. "That's why she wrote us a letter. She said, 'Before I cash in, why don't you make me happy and put me on your show?' It was a hand-written, marvelous, funny letter. We called her and she was so cute on the telephone. She came in and worked so very hard. I couldn't believe that a woman her age was doing a dance number on Tuesday that she'd started to learn on Monday. And she said, 'Do you know, in the old movies, it would have taken six weeks to learn this dance and another two weeks to film it?'"

"We must work fast on television. But we don't spend all our time here at the studio like some shows. And that's due to organization. For example, our director is very sharp. Starting on Monday, it's boom, boom, boom. We go right through the schedule. We rehearse all week. Then on Friday we tape the show in front of audiences. We never do pickup shots or redo anything—if it goes wrong, it goes wrong. It's more of a live feeling. When we're finished, we go home."

"I'm with my children more than most working mothers, because I don't work your average eight or ten hours a day. I work about 30 hours a week. This means that Joe and



Tim Conway (right) challenges Harvey Korman in comedy sketch

**"WHEN THAT LIGHT GOES ON AND THE AUDIENCE IS HERE, YOU'VE GOT TO DELIVER!"**

come home, we eat with our three daughters, we're with them for a while, and then we put them to bed. We have a week off every fourth week and I have summers off to coordinate with the kids' vacation."

"What dreams do you have for your children?"

"Hopefully, they will grow up in a world that someday will have clean air and be peaceful, and they will be able to do what will make them happy in life. To me, all the problems in

the world are academic if there is no world to live in. So I think the first problem is environment. I can remember clean air. My kids can't. I think that's terrible."

Then Carol graciously excuses herself. It is her turn to rehearse.

The sketch is a series of satires of commercials. Carol is playing a harassed housewife with continual invasions. She picks up a peanut butter jar, and Harvey, dressed as Peter Pan, flies through the window.

"Hi, I'm Peter Pan. That's too crunchy. Use *my* peanut butter."

Carol angrily chases him out with a knife. And through another door shuffles Tim Conway as an old man.

"Who are you?" Carol is frightened.

"I'm Euell Gibbons," draws Tim. "Do you know how many parts of a chair are edible?" He breaks off a section of her kitchen chair and munches on it. "There are many things around the house that are full of nutrition." He shuffles toward the door crunching and says, "I'm gonna eat your garage."

My story was taking shape. My assignment had been to do a behind-the-scene report on "The Carol Burnett Show." In advance, I had been promised cooperation and clearance. Everyone was helpful. During that week, I observed rehearsals, camera blocking, and live tapings, and I chatted with producers, writers, dancers, designers, technicians, cue-card holders, and the star.

Basically, the week-long schedule

starts with the first script reading on Monday morning and ends on Friday with the making of two video-tape recordings before live audiences—first in the afternoon and then in the evening. From these two tapings, the best footage is edited into a final form for showing several weeks later on network television.

The "Carol Burnett Show" is produced by Punkin, Inc., Production. "Punkin" is Carol's name for the company because that's what she calls her children. Her husband, Joe Hamilton, is the executive producer. Punkin produces a series of 24 shows a year and sells them to the CBS-TV network for over \$200,000 a week. Out of that, the company pays all salaries and costs and hopefully has enough overhead to experiment with new pilots, new sketches, new writers and to invest in other projects.

Fifty full-time salaried persons work on the weekly show itself. Plus there are about 50 CBS-TV employees—publicity, technicians, etc.—who are assigned to the company for two or three days a week or work throughout the week on a fringe area. In addition, there are 28 stage hands, eight copyists, and a 32-piece orchestra. It's like producing an hour-long Broadway show every week.

"This is the most professional company I have been with since I left the army," I am told by Ed Simmons, a 23-year veteran writer with such persons in comedy as Martha Raye, George Gobel, Red Skelton, and Norman Lear. Ed is now producer-

head writer of the Carol Burnett Show. "Everybody is here doing his or her job," Ed continues. "There's an aura of mutual respect. There's no supreme authority. Everybody's views are respected. On Monday of each week, everybody just says, 'Here we've got to do a show on Friday; let's get going.' And we do it. There's no pettiness; no jealousies; no temperament. And that's unheard of, believe me, in this business. They're really pros on this show. And it starts at the top."

And if the 1974 Emmy nominations are any indication of how other in the industry feel, the following Burnett staff members were nominated for awards: Carol Burnett, Harvey Korman, Vicki Lawrence, performers; Tim Conway, guest; Dave Powers, director; ten writers headed by Ed Simmons; Ernie Flatt, choreographer; Peter Matz, music director; Bob Mackie, costume designer; Paul Barnes and Bob Sanson, art directors; and Bill Harp, set decorator. And if you watched the Emmy show on TV, you saw that "The Carol Burnett Show" itself won an Emmy, as did Harvey Korman and the eleven writers.

"Carol is a real clown," says Associate Producer Bob Wright, who has worked with Carol for 16 years and with Joe Hamilton for 20 years. "The clowning and the shtick that come from the physical movement of the comedy sketch are never problems for her, but she is basically a method comedienne. She's got to be mo-



Carol Burnett and guest, Gloria Swanson (as Charlie Chaplin), do silent film pantomime

"I DO THE CHARWOMAN NOW ONLY WHEN I CAN FIND A GOOD PANTOMIME THAT HAS MEANING."

ated, and she's got to know in her mind that this character would do that. It's got to be real to her, even when knowing it's ridiculous. Comedy is really based on reality. And that's one of the reasons she's good—people watching her say, 'Hey, I know exactly what she's going through.'

"The great masses feel that Carol is their next-door neighbor—a daughter, a sister, a mother—and they become so personally involved with her that their individual tastes rule their

decision whether or not she's funny. This is very unique in comedy. Lucille Ball doesn't have that reaction at all. People don't look on Lucy as a relative or a friend, but they do with Carol, so that we have to be doubly careful on the show that Carol's clowning doesn't go too far and offend.

"The hardest problem is finding new characters, new ideas, and new satires for Carol and Harvey, who are our main concerns. They are the team."

The answer is with the show's writers.

"Comedy writers are a special breed," Ed Simmons informs me. "You can learn the craftsmanship of how to write but you cannot learn how to be funny. It just happens.



There's no formula for funny scripts.

"Fortunately, we write for a very talented family. Because Harvey and Carol can play any role in the world, they can take any humorous man-woman sketch and make it work. We also write for a variety of guests. For example, when you write for Tim Conway, it's purely Tim. Nobody else.

"When we write, we deal in both the word and the move, because it's a visual medium and we're dealing in physical comedy.

"We try to do a little adult and satiric writing on current issues but nothing as political as 'All in the Family' because we're a different kind of show."

I am curious, "What kind of audience do you have in mind when you write your scripts?"

"The safest thing is to have nobody in mind," Ed replies. "Really, we have a studio audience of 300 to 500 people which covers a spectrum from small kids to elderly people and,



**"IF SOCIETY CAN FACE  
REALITY AND LAUGH, IT'S  
A VERY HEALTHY THING  
FOR US ALL."**

course, our happiness is the response from them. But then our happiness is also the response we are getting in Nielsen ratings, that we know X millions of people are seeing the show

every week. If you ever stopped to think about who your audience is, it wouldn't work.

"Comedy is a very healthy thing because I think none of us have too much to laugh about, and if you can face reality and laugh, this is the best band-aid."

My next stop is with the dancers.

Don Crichton, head dancer on the show, reports: "We work from 10 to 5 on Monday, and by Tuesday noon we're done. Then Tuesday afternoon



Dave Powers (left) directs studio rehearsal and camera blocking from control booth

we teach that week's dance routine to all the principals—Carol, Harvey, Vicki, the guest stars. Wednesday morning we polish it up. That afternoon we have the run-through. Thursday we're in the studio for blocking and rehearsal. Friday we tape. So it really goes very quickly. The dancers learn a show in a day and a half at most, and Carol and company learn their comedy sketches in an afternoon and a morning. It's very quick. It's great, if you like the immediacy of it, the chance to do different things every week; it's very creative.

"You have to be a very versatile dancer to work on a steady television show like this one because one week we'll do a tap routine for a finale, the next week we'll do a very classical

**"WE MUST WORK FAST IN TELEVISION. STARTING ON MONDAY. IT'S BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!"**

number, the next week we'll do take-off on one of the movies that Carol does where we'll do old-time or ballroom movement. And you have to be able to catch on immediately. On this show we're lucky because our choreographer, Ernie Flatt, can really grind out things quickly; what he does is good; and he can handle any style of dancing. As a result, we work very well together."

"Our dancers have been with me for a long time," says Ernie Flatt.

Their qualifications are unusual. They've got to be able to do all sorts of dancing, plus have a sense of comedy, be able to sing, and have a dramatic talent, for they're often involved in the comedy sketches and in the mini-musicals on the show.

"In working out each week's choreography, I don't prepare ahead because, for me, it takes the fun out of creating with live bodies.

"I also have to design choreography that the guests can learn very quickly so that they look like they're performing well even though they have had no dancing training."

Music is very much a part of the show—the background music for the sketches, special songs for Carol, music for guest musicians, and the production numbers, mini-musicals or medleys. Many viewers don't realize how much of that music is originally written by the staff.

Once the timing and contents of the show are finalized after the Wednesday run-through, Peter Matz, the musical director, works late Wednesday night—if necessary, all night—to complete the arranging of the music so that it's ready for the orchestra on Thursday.

"Peter Matz is the best in the business in our opinion," says Bob Wright. "He's our kind of music man. He can do pop and rock and roll, he's great with strings, the fat sounds and the beautiful lush sounds. And so the musicians pick up his music on Thursday evening, sight-read it, and then record immediately.

They are fantastic! And they can do it because they are the best on the West Coast. We pay them more than the scale to get them, but it's worth it. They work together well under Pete, for he is a great conductor, as well as a great arranger.

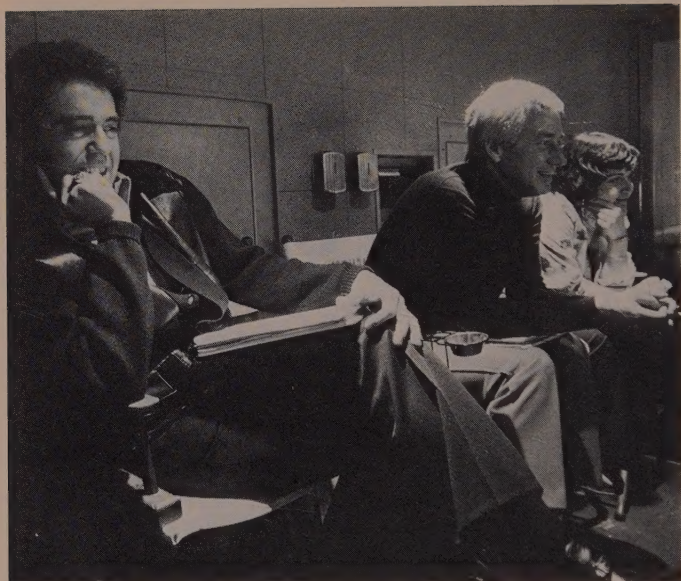
"All music has to be pre-audio-recorded Thursday night because you can't get decent pickup on the studio stage. So we put the orchestra on a beautifully balanced track. Then on Friday at our live tapings, we aim the sound at the singer, and he or she sings live on top of that recording. On television we don't have time to lip-sync like they do in movies."

The physical look of the show is in the joint hands of the art directors, the costume designer, and the lighting director.

The art director's job on a variety show is unique because, unlike drama, you don't design for realism. You can run the gamut of your creative imagination—impressionistic, stylistic, etc. But the temptation also is to go all out and not worry about the dollar. But the art directors on "The Carol Burnett Show," Paul Barnes and Bob Sansom, are the best quality-within-budget-minded designers.

By Wednesday morning, all scenery and sets have to be designed, constructed, and hauled into Studio 33 where they are put in place, marked, and the lighting routine worked out. The physical side of that week's show begins to take shape.

"Most people don't realize that on this show the ugly, funny clothes are



Observing rehearsal are Joe Hamilton, Executive Producer (center), and Bob Wright, Associate Producer

very well thought out," observes Bob Mackie, costume designer. "I enjoy giving a new twist to Carol's characters by the clothes she wears. It's important to her. In fact, I've heard her say that sometimes some characters are so hard to get into that she doesn't really get the feeling of a character until Friday when she puts on the costume. She works from the outside in."

Usually Bob reads the script on Friday, does designs over the weekend, puts it all to work on Monday, and by Tuesday morning first fittings for that week's show are done.

Bob has worked with Carol from the beginning, but he also has designed clothes for such stars as Cher, Barbara Streisand, and Diana Ross.

Once the show moves into Studio

33 on Thursday, you know that Dave Powers, the director, is boss. His voice of instructions and questions from the control room over the loudspeaker to the cast and stage crew sounds like the voice of God.

"He's an amazingly prepared man," says Bob Wright. "He prints his weekly production schedule and sticks to it. I can count on him. In the rehearsal hall, he knows what he wants. He has studied the script. There is give and take with the actors and he is flexible. But when he goes into that studio on Thursday, his book has every camera shot marked. And his associate and technical directors have copies of the identical information beforehand. At 11 o'clock Thursday morning, he is ready to go. I have never seen him fail. If w

start later than 11, there's a technical problem or a mechanical failure, not because Dave is not prepared.

"Every director wants to be creative and have more time to develop a lovely picture. But, at the same time, the high costs and the fast pace of television mean we cannot be wastefully creative. So we have to do the best we can with our budget. And Dave does that."

The working atmosphere around "The Carol Burnett Show" is characterized by an observation from Bob Wright: "When I'm talking with anyone who comes to be interviewed for a job or kids in college who are interested in going into television, I say the first thing is to be a good person, then do your good job. When I hire somebody, I want a person who is going to fit—that's number one; job skills are number two. I would much rather have chemistry and get-along-ability than a perfect typist or a perfect audio person or a perfect cameraperson. I want the kind of people who can ride with the punches, get along with their fellow humans, and contribute."

"Carol is the soul of the show," summarizes dancer Don Crichton. "She has respect for everyone on this show and, as a result, she gets respect. I think the show's success is because we have excellent people on her production staff and her creative staff, but it's her love and earthiness that I think come through to the audience, that makes them love her and everything she does." □



**"CAROL IS THE SOUL OF THE SHOW; IT'S HER LOVE AND EARTHINESS THAT COME THROUGH TO THE AUDIENCE."**

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